



# NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



Contact: Linda Joy  
301-713-0622, ext. 127

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## **NOAA National Weather Service and FEMA Offer Flood Safety Tips for Flood Safety Awareness Week**

Floodwaters can be swift, powerful and, at times, deadly. However, advanced planning can help protect lives and minimize property losses due to flooding. With the spring thaw approaching, the NOAA National Weather Service and FEMA are partnering to observe the fifth annual Flood Safety Awareness Week, March 16-20, 2009.

The National Weather Service, along with FEMA's FloodSmart program, has launched a new Web page – <http://www.floodsmart.gov/noaafloodweek> – that shows the effects and cost of flooding to millions of people in the United States. The site also provides essential information on what to know and do before, during and after a flood, and a variety of safety tips and online tools, including one that lets them see whether their homes and businesses are threatened at various flood stages.

"Floods claim nearly 100 lives and cost billions in property damage in the United States annually," said Jack Hayes, director of NOAA National Weather Service. "Spring is peak flood season in many parts of the country, but floods can happen anywhere, at any time of the year. Many lives could be saved by following some simple and essential flood safety tips."

"Knowing what you can do to protect against the impact of flooding is critical in keeping your family, home and financial well-being secure," said Ed Connor, acting federal insurance administrator for FEMA's Mitigation Directorate. "Purchasing flood insurance is one important step you can take now. Many residents incorrectly believe that homeowners insurance covers the costs of flooding, but in fact, only a flood policy can."

### **Understand Your Risk**

One way to learn about flood risk is by visiting the National Weather Service's Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service Web site at: <http://www.weather.gov/water>. Click on your location on the U.S. map in the center of the page to learn about conditions in your area.

National Weather Service hydrologists, in cooperation with the U.S. Geological Survey, FEMA and other water agencies and river commissions, have developed a tool that allows emergency planners as well as business and home owners to visualize flood risks in specific locations. This tool – a series of flood inundation maps – is available for a number of coastal and river areas, with plans to expand coverage across the United States. These interactive maps display the depth and extent of flood waters for specific river stage levels. Flood inundation maps are available at [www.weather.gov/ahps/inundation.php](http://www.weather.gov/ahps/inundation.php).

### **Know What to Do**

Review flood safety information and preparedness tips so that you will know what to do if you are suddenly faced with a flood. Seek information from credible local and federal emergency planning agencies. Recommended Web resources include:

- National Weather Service Flood Safety: [www.weather.gov/floodsafety](http://www.weather.gov/floodsafety)
- National Weather Service Turn Around Don't Drown: [www.weather.gov/os/water/tadd](http://www.weather.gov/os/water/tadd)
- FEMA's FloodSmart: [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov)

- FEMA's Flood page: [www.fema.gov/hazard/flood](http://www.fema.gov/hazard/flood)

## **Take Action**

Consider what steps you can take now and what steps you will need to take if your home or business floods. Know what you will need to do if you encounter flooding while driving or outdoors. Some tips:

Now:

- Create an evacuation plan before flooding occurs.
- Discuss flood plans with your family; everyone should know what to do in case family members are not together when a flood occurs.
- Purchase flood insurance: talk to your insurance agent about your coverage options.

When Floods Strike:

- Use a battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards to receive up-to-date emergency information.
- Evacuate immediately, if advised to do so.
- Turn around if a road is flooded. It may be more dangerous than it appears.
- Keep emergency supplies on hand, such as non-perishable food, medicine, maps, a flashlight and first-aid kit.

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit <http://www.noaa.gov>